

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An improved Diesel exhaust filter comprising element of the type having a rigid porous wall portion that is comprised of an acicular ceramic, the porous wall portion having a first side and a second side, the porous wall portion being coated with having therein a precious metal catalyst Diesel oxidation catalyst layer and a NO_x absorbent layer, wherein the Diesel oxidation catalyst layer is adjacent to the first side of the porous wall and the NO_x absorbent layer is between the Diesel oxidation layer and second side of the porous wall such that when exhaust gas from a Diesel engine is flowed through the rigid porous wall from the first side to the second side, the exhaust gas containing excess oxygen, NO_x and soot, the soot in the exhaust gas is trapped within the rigid porous wall and catalytically oxidized to carbon dioxide, the NO is catalytically oxidized to NO₂, which NO₂ is then absorbed by the NO_x absorbent, and such that when the exhaust gas contains excess hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide, then the NO_x absorbent is regenerated and the remaining hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide are catalytically converted to nitrogen and carbon dioxide, wherein the improvement comprises: the rigid porous wall comprising an acicular ceramic.
2. (Currently Amended) The improved Diesel exhaust filter element of Claim 1, wherein the NO_x absorbent is comprised of a barium salt, barium oxide or combination thereof.
3. (Currently Amended) The improved Diesel exhaust filter element of Claim 1, wherein the NO_x absorbent is present from 40 grams/liter to 570

grams/liter of the filter, precious metal catalyst is comprised of at least one of platinum, rhodium and palladium.

4. (Currently Amended) The improved Diesel exhaust filter element of Claim 1, wherein the acicular ceramic is comprised of acicular mullite.
5. (Currently Amended) The improved Diesel exhaust filter element of Claim 3, wherein the acicular ceramic is comprised of acicular mullite further comprising a three way catalyst layer within the porous rigid wall, said third catalyst layer being between the second side and NOx absorbent layer.
6. (Currently Amended) An improved Diesel exhaust filter ~~element of the type~~ having a rigid acicular ceramic porous wall and within said porous wall is a catalyst composition comprised of a NOx absorbent and a soot combustion catalyst, wherein the NOx absorbent is comprised of a barium salt, barium oxide or combination thereof and said NOx absorbent is present from 40 grams/liter to 570 grams/liter of the filter, portion, the porous wall portion having a first side and a second side, such that when exhaust gas from a Diesel engine is flowed through the rigid porous wall from the first side to the second side, soot in the exhaust gas is trapped within the rigid porous wall, wherein the improvement comprises: the rigid porous wall comprising three layers, the first layer being adjacent the first side of the rigid porous wall, the first layer comprising a Diesel oxidation catalyst, the third layer being adjacent the second side of the rigid porous wall, the third layer comprising a three-way catalyst, the second layer being between the first layer and the third layer, the second layer comprising a nitrogen oxide adsorber, the second layer comprising an acicular ceramic.
7. (Currently Amended) The improved Diesel exhaust filter element of Claim 6, wherein the acicular ceramic is acicular mullite, the Diesel oxidation catalyst is the NOx absorbent is further comprised of platinum alumina

~~particles, wherein the nitrogen oxide adsorber is comprised of a barium salt, and wherein the three way catalyst is comprised of one or more of platinum, rhodium or palladium.~~

8. (Currently Amended) An improved Diesel exhaust filter ~~element of the type having comprising a rigid porous wall that is comprised of an acicular ceramic, the porous wall having a first side and a second side, the filter having a Diesel oxidation catalyst layer, three way catalyst layer and a NO_x absorbent layer, wherein the Diesel oxidation catalyst layer is adjacent to the first side of the porous wall, the three way catalyst layer is adjacent to the second side of the porous wall and at least a portion of the NO_x absorbent layer is in the porous wall between the Diesel oxidation layer and three way catalyst layer~~ a rigid porous wall portion, the porous wall portion having a first side and a second side, such that when exhaust gas from a Diesel engine is flowed through the rigid porous wall from the first side to the second side, soot in the exhaust gas is trapped on and within the rigid porous wall, wherein the improvement comprises: the rigid porous wall comprising two layers, the first layer being adjacent the first side of the rigid porous wall, the first layer comprising a Diesel oxidation catalyst, the second layer being between the first layer and the second side of the rigid porous wall, the second layer comprising a nitrogen oxide adsorber and a three way catalyst, the second layer comprising an acicular ceramic.
9. (Currently Amended) The improved Diesel exhaust filter of Claim 8, ~~wherein the first layer comprises platinum and wherein the second layer comprises barium salt, and at least one of platinum, rhodium or palladium and wherein the acicular ceramic is acicular mullite.~~
10. (Cancelled).
11. (New) The improved Diesel exhaust filter of Claim 7, wherein the alumina particles are colloidal alumina particles.

12. (New) The improved Diesel exhaust filter of Claim 8, wherein the Diesel oxidation catalyst is comprised of alumina particles impregnated and coated with platinum.
13. (New) The improved Diesel exhaust filter of Claim 11, wherein the alumina is a colloidal alumina.
14. (New) The improved Diesel filter of Claim 13, wherein the NO_x absorbent is comprised of alumina, platinum and barium oxide.
15. (New) The improved Diesel filter of Claim 14, wherein the alumina is colloidal alumina.
16. (new) The improved Diesel filter of Claim 8, wherein the three way catalyst is comprised of platinum, rhodium, palladium, alumina, cerium oxide and zirconium oxide.
17. (New) The improved Diesel filter of Claim 16, wherein the alumina is colloidal alumina.
18. (New) The improved Diesel filter of Claim 8 wherein the NO_x absorber is entirely within the porous filter wall.
19. (New) The improved Diesel filter of Claim 18 wherein each of the catalyst layers are within the porous filter wall.